

***All of Us Research Program*
Communications and Marketing Partners
Funding Opportunity Webinar
Questions and Answers
February 26, 2019**

Program

Question: How many participants are currently enrolled in *All of Us*?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): There are about 185,000 registered and more than 110,000 who have completed the first part of the protocol.

Question: Will all participants provide genomic data or have their genome sequenced?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The goal is to have biosamples from 1 million people that will be genotyped and have a full genome sequence.

Question: Will the target populations include all demographics?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Yes.

Question: What is the target date on the timeline to engage children?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): One to two years from now.

Question: What are the factors that motivate people to become participants in *All of Us*?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The two primary things that motivate people to participate are altruism, meaning the ability to give back to their communities, families, and future generations, and learning more about their own health.

Question: What have been barriers to recruiting participants?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): This program is heavily digital, so there is a need to be mindful of people who are not digitally savvy or do not have access to technology. Some people are skeptical of *All of Us*, because it is a government program and utilizes sensitive health information. People are also nervous about having their information compromised. While *All of Us* does everything possible to prevent security breaches, the Research Program cannot guarantee it.

Question: Does the program have data available on people who registered for the program but did not complete the steps necessary to enroll? Where are people lost in the process?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Research Program staff are beginning to look at where in the process people are stopping their enrollment.

Question: To what extent does *All of Us* plan to use video in their communication?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The Research Program currently uses video in its communications and plans to continue to do so.

Question: Can you provide more details about what other languages the program is planning to use?

Answer (Ms. Carlson): *All of Us* launched the Spanish experience about a year ago. The Research Program is planning a thoughtful and strategic way to expand the language capabilities. *All of Us* has developed an overall language strategy plan, including a pilot phase of limited translation of some informational assets into simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Arabic.

Question: Will prospective participants be rejected for health reasons?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): People are not rejected from participating in *All of Us* for any health reasons.

Question: How will participants who drop out of the program be handled? Will the program keep apprised of participants in specific areas or demographics dropping out in order to focus on pulling up recruitment in those areas or demographics?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The Research Program has a rule that there is free choice involved in participating in the program. If, at any time, participants decide that the program is not for them for any reason, they are able to withdraw. In order to inform the communications strategy, the Research Program reviews different areas of the country and demographics that are more likely or less likely to join the program in order to inform the communications strategy.

Question: How will the Research Program handle a larger number of participants than expected?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): That would be a wonderful problem to have! The program is mostly focused on diversity among participants. While anyone is welcome to join, *All of Us* may invite participants in specific communities to participate in specific types of data sharing so as to increase diversity.

Question: Who are the affiliate medical centers and community organizations involved in *All of Us*?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): A list of the awarded institutions involved in the program is available on the *All of Us* website. [See <https://allofus.nih.gov/about/program-partners>.]

Question: Will the program publish a regional map of participating organizations?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): No, but a list of all of the participating organizations and their locations is available on the website.

Question: Since the program's launch in 2016, what is different, what has it learned, and where does it want to go?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The program has learned many lessons regarding successful ways to reach different populations and to get responses from participants. One key marketing aspect that has changed is the name of the project, from the Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI) Cohort Program to *All of Us*. This was an important branding change.

Question: Is the program satisfied with the diversity of enrolled participants?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Yes. About 79% of participants in the program represent communities that are historically underrepresented in biomedical research and about 50% of participants are racial or ethnic minorities. These numbers meet the goals of the program.

Question: Is enrollment on target or behind schedule?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Enrollment is on track. The rate of enrollment continues to grow as more partner organizations join the program.

Question: How is *All of Us* approaching rural communities with low internet access?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The Research Program is reaching rural communities in many different ways. One initiative is the *All of Us* Journey, which involves two mobile units that travel throughout the country. One unit focuses on education and engagement, and one does full enrollment in regions where there might not be an affiliated medical center. Another way *All of Us* is reaching rural communities is through the direct volunteer program, in which we have partnerships with corporations like Quest Diagnostics and Walgreens that allow for access to different parts of the country and can support full enrollment of participants. The Research Program also works with different community partners throughout the country to ensure that all populations are reached and can participate in the program.

Question: Are there partners that are non-NIH awardees? Are there entities that are independently promoting this program?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): There are partners engaged in the program that are not NIH awardees. There are organizations and government agencies that are interested in and support *All of Us*. Also, the broader scientific community is supportive of the program and sees it as an opportunity to conduct research in a new and efficient way in the future.

FOA-Related Information

Question: What, if any, current channels exist to provide customer service to consortium partners (Task 3)?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Current channels include regular and ad hoc meetings and teleconferences for various working groups; the online collaboration tool Confluence; an asset portal for processing asset requests and making asset files available to consortium members; and designated points of contact for partner inquiries.

Question: Are there existing evaluation data that can be used to inform the development of the evaluation plan (Task 4)?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The program collects a variety of data that may be used for evaluation, including Google Analytics, email delivery, social media metrics, digital marketing metrics, Support Center inquiries, and enrollment figures. *All of Us* would also look to applicants to also suggest their own approaches for evaluating effectiveness of communication strategies.

Question: What research does *All of Us* perform to determine various audience messaging?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): Data regarding audience messaging is not available through the FOA for applicants at this time.

Question: Will awardees have the opportunity to look at particular metrics that help *All of Us* speak to various audiences?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Yes, that material is made available to awardees.

Question: The solicitation states, “NIH intends to fund at least one award for FY2019.” Does the government anticipate more than one award? If multiple awardees, how does the government foresee dividing the work? How will multiple awardees work together?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): *All of Us* intends to fund at least one award in FY2019. The exact number awarded, whether one or multiple, will depend on the applications received and results of the review process. Generally, *All of Us* encourages organizations to partner if needed to provide the best response to the FOA, considering its full scope. The Other Transaction (OT) mechanism does allow for greater flexibility, such that awarded activity can be modified or supported through separate awardees, based on their respective capabilities and expertise. In such a case, NIH would discuss this possibility with partners in advance. If multiple awardees are selected, they will be expected to collaborate with one another, NIH, and all the consortium partners.

Question: Would the government quantify current outreach tools and methods?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The program currently employs a wide range of outreach methods and tools, relating to print assets, paid media (primarily digital marketing), earned media, events, social media, and influencer engagement.

Question: Can you explain the difference between the two current FOAs, the Engagement and Retention Innovators and this Communications and Marketing Partners FOA?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): There is a webinar on February 27 at 3 p.m. regarding the Engagement and Retention Innovators FOA. That award will focus on building and enhancing the network of community partners as well as participant and prospective participant engagement activities. This Communications and Marketing Partners award focuses on the full spectrum of communications activities as they relate to public relations, marketing, media, and participant communication.

Question: Can the program provide more detail on the criteria to have “a national network of consultants to plan, strategize, and execute regional campaigns”?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): The key is to demonstrate the ability to reach participants, prospective participants, and other stakeholders throughout the country, regardless of where they live.

Application Process/Award Process

Question: Why is the request for proposals (RFP) being put out now?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): Since its launch in 2016, *All of Us* is consistently updating its timeline of what goals need to be accomplished and the future vision of the program. This was the right time to launch this current RFP.

Question: Is there an organization currently conducting this work (i.e. an incumbent)? If so, will the work be transitioned from the incumbent to the new awardees?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Yes, there is a current awardee that is responsible for supporting program communications. Details regarding how the transition process will occur will be made after awardees have been selected.

Question: Would you please explain the application review process in more detail? Are the criteria in the Review Process and Evaluation Process sections ranked, and if so, how? Or are they equally weighted?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): The award mechanism used for this funding opportunity is OT. Standard peer review rankings do not apply. All of the components of these sections are important. They are not formally ranked or weighted. Generally, reviewers will look first for a sound and innovative technical approach, but this must be strongly supported by past performance and key personnel. In reviewing cost proposals, NIH seeks to determine which awardee can offer the best value for the government. Programmatic priority criteria are desired qualifications of awardees. Again, we encourage organizations to partner as needed to provide the best response to the funding opportunity announcement.

Question: Are traditional government contractors eligible and allowed to respond to these Other Transaction Authority (OTA) funding opportunities?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): Yes. Eligible organizations include for-profit organizations, nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education. Please see the "Eligible Applicants" section of the funding announcement for details.

Question: Will *All of Us* be making any of the data available to applicants ahead of the RFP for us to tailor a proposal to *All of Us* audience information?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): The type of data in question is unclear, but one of the core values of the *All of Us* program is transparency. The Research Program website has information about the tactics, goals, and priorities of the program.

Question: Would you please provide more details about the number and type of deliverables required?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Under the OT mechanism, the Research Program is looking for applicants to put forward their recommendations for deliverables. This is unlike what is seen in contract RFPs.

Question: What information is the program looking for in the three pages of biosketches?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): The standard NIH biosketch form is not required. Applicants should provide brief bios on the key people involved in the application and the expertise they will be providing.

Question: To what extent would the program like to see a team versus a single applicant?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): It is up to the applicant to decide the best way to address the FOA.

Question: Will you make the list of attendees on this call available?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): No, *All of Us* will not provide that information.

Budget

Question: Can the government provide guidance on required travel to NIH and elsewhere?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): Three members of the awardee organization should plan and budget up to four trips annually to Bethesda, Maryland for Steering Committee and other strategic meetings. Travel costs should be included in applicants' direct cost estimates.

Question: Is there a total cost cap? It appears that \$15 million is the direct cost cap.

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): There is no total cost cap. Applications should not exceed \$15 million in direct costs per year. As a general policy, NIH will use the applicants' federal negotiated indirect cost rate to reimburse indirect costs (or, facilities and administrative costs) under OT awards using the applicants' federal negotiated indirect cost rate. Any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may propose and justify a rate for NIH review and consideration. More details about cost considerations are available in the [Other Transaction Award Policy Guide for the NIH Precision Medicine Initiative Research Programs](#).

Question: Is cost sharing/match required for an award?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): No, cost sharing/matching is not required.

Question: Is it a requirement that the vendor purchase Web-based display advertisements (commonly known as "banner ads")?

Answer (Ms. Cotler): No, it is not a requirement. *All of Us* looks to applicants to outline their recommended technical approach.

Question: Would the government clarify whether the two-page limit on the cost proposal includes the budget detail and accompanying price narrative?

Answer (Ms. Fleisher): The cost proposal, including the budget detail and accompanying narrative/justification, must not exceed two pages.

If there are any additional questions, please e-mail pmicpfoainquiries@mail.nih.gov.